

National Republican

W. J. MURRAY, Editor and Proprietor.

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THE REPUBLICAN HAS A LARGE CIRCULATION THAN ANY OTHER NEWSPAPER IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

THURSDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 18, 1873.

TO THE PUBLIC.

The business office of THE REPUBLICAN for the present will continue at Tenth and D streets, at which place all persons having business relations with the paper will call. Due notice will be given of the removal of the business department to the new REPUBLICAN building.

DEMAGOGUES IN CONGRESS.

A Democratic contemporary of acknowledged rank and conceded ability in that party says, in a recent article: "The inspirations of the country are rich and abundant, yet they seldom flower out into the form of a great statesman. After such a war, and such recuperative vitality, and such reconstruction of general order, it is natural to look for the great intellect—or rather the great men to whom the country has already been indebted for such results—and upon whose sagacity the people depend for the great practical measures which shall be commensurate with the resources of a nation like this." This passage occurs in an editorial written under the caption of "Demagogues in Congress," and is of course intended as a shot upon the leaders of the Republican party in that body.

During the last two or three years it has become the fashion everywhere, and especially in the press and in current literature, to severely criticize public men, and to condemn them in many instances without reason. Some one has said that the telegraph has killed oratory in Congress. It has also killed greatness. It has shown statesmanship of the glamour that enveloped it twenty-five years ago. The generations that knew Mr. Clay and Mr. Benton, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Calhoun saw only one side of them, and their better side. They were always upon dress parade. The public never saw them in every day life. They were eternally upon the stage in the most dramatic of attitudes and situations. In these latter days all this has been changed. Our public men are photographed in a thousand journals every hour and minute of the day; subjected to a scrutiny closer than public men in any country; and the portraits are scanned morning after morning by millions who, as a general rule, accept the judgment of the artist upon the merits or demerits of the work.

Again, this is an age of iconoclasts—an age fatal to hero worship. We have no idols, and what is more we do not deserve to have any. The late war has in more ways than one been of immense advantage to the country. It made us not only a reading, but a thinking people—made the daily journal as essential to the community of a thousand people as the person and the school teacher. The currents of thought and action have changed. We have turned a cycle in our development and stand upon a higher intellectual plane than we stood ever before. The voice that would have arrested our fathers in the stage coach thirty years ago is lost in the whirl and roar of the locomotive. In our quicker methods, in our more active, vigorous life, impressions are less easily made, and he who would stamp his image upon life generation in any walk must have extraordinary opportunities or overshadowing ability. We average better than we did when the great men whom we so much revered were with us, and, in the same ratio, are more exacting in our demands upon those who would sit in the seats of the statesmen of the last generation. The criticism of our contemporaries is a common one, of no great depth, and of very little force.

Looking at Congress to-day it compares favorably with even the Congresses to which we point with so tender a reverence. Conkling and Morton, Edmunds and Carpenter, Sumner and Howe, Schurz and Thurman and Bayard are men of the very highest order of ability. In the House Butler and Dawes, Giddings and Tremaire, Kaukon and Kelley, Beck and Niblock, Marshall and Potter and Co are of no mean height when measured by the highest standard of Congress. The majority of us did not discover that Lincoln was the greatest of our Presidents until he was laid in the tomb at Springfield. Mr. Seward was almost without honor at the very time that he was conducting a diplomatic correspondence the most difficult in all our history. No man wished more influence in a great party, let it with more gallantry, inspired it with more courage than Thaddeus Stevens. The shadows of these men become larger and larger as they recede into the past, and already we begin to forget in the splendor of their deeds the events which have made our earlier statesmen illustrious. We must not be too exacting. Congress is not entirely of demagogues, and posterity will not, we are certain, altogether forget a score of men upon the one side and the other who are now shining marks for ridicule and condemnation.

REFORM IN PENNSYLVANIA.

The opposition to the new constitution in Pennsylvania seems to have been remarkable for nothing but its wondrous sound. It did not make a respectable showing in the city of Philadelphia, where it looked for its greatest strength. That city, in a vote of eighty thousand gave nearly twenty-seven thousand majority for the new constitution, while the majority in the State will exceed one hundred and fifty thousand. In Philadelphia a bold effort was made to change the result and defeat the popular will by changing the returns, but this trick was defeated by the direct intervention of the Mayor.

There are many sweeping reforms in the new constitution, prominent among which is that correcting the abuses of State legislation at Harrisburg. The evils attending special legislation will be cured, the Legislature being positively prohibited from passing any law general in their application to the State at large. All supplies must be obtained by contract, and officials cannot be voted extra compensation. The Governor is permitted to veto a separate item of an appropriation bill, thus preventing many abuses that are too frequently incorporated in a general appropriation for the necessary expenses of government. The pardoning power is taken from the Governor and lodged with a court of pardons, of which the Governor will be a member. The article on railroads is important, confining these corporations to the business of common carriers, and forbidding them to manufacture articles for transportation. The consolidation of competing lines is also forbidden by

this article, as is also discrimination in charges for carrying freight. Very radical changes are made in the judiciary. Some of the rich offices in Philadelphia are abolished, while others are restricted to fall salaries. The overwhelming vote cast for the new constitution, after a pretty thorough canvass and discussion of its merits, is evidence that the people were profoundly interested in the subject of constitutional reform. Perhaps the most important change is that requiring each ballot cast at elections to have a number corresponding to the number of the voter on the tally list, which is expected to prevent fraud. If it succeeds in furnishing Philadelphia with a better class of men for public officers than those who have masqueraded in that city so long and with so much profit to themselves, it will not have been made in vain.

THE QUESTION of the salary repeal, so prone of discussion and the cause of perpetual contention, culminated yesterday in the adoption of the Burling proposition, which fixes the compensation of Congressmen at \$6,000 per annum and actual traveling expenses, but does not molest the increased allowance of others included in the act of March 3, 1873.

When the House convened yesterday noon the Kasson amendment, involving a general reduction, had been adopted, but the bill proper moved which only terminated with the simulation of all the original landmarks of the debate. First came the proposition to exempt the Presidential office from the sweeping repeat, which was closely followed by the amendment of Mr. Tremaine to exclude Cabinet ministers from the scope of the measure, but these propositions were rejected by immense majorities. At this time it was evident that a general combination of expectant revenues would be involved in a return to the original Congressional salary. While contesting these points many amusing incidents occurred which provoked laughter from the members themselves interested. But the tempest indicated a total repeal, and an instant return to the old standard. It was at this point that those foremost repeat, over again, that the revenue would be involved in a return to the original Congressional salary. 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